



SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which includes all of Bannock County, had a seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 5.6 percent in August 2002, as shown in Southeast Idaho Table 1. This rate was down two-tenths of a percentage point from the July 2002 revised rate of 5.8 percent and up nine-tenths of a percentage point from the July 2001 rate of 4.7 percent.

Unemployment rates for six Southeast Idaho counties are shown in Southeast Idaho Table 2. Power and Caribou Counties continue to endure high unemployment rates because of their dependence on natural resource based industries and the loss of jobs at Astaris. Bingham County replaced Oneida County with the lowest unemployment rate of the seven Southeast Idaho counties. Bingham County's large agricultural and agricultural-related industry base provides an abundance of jobs to workers during the busy crop growing, harvesting, and processing season.

Southeast Idaho Table 2: Unemployment Rates for Southeast Idaho Counties (in percentages)

	Aug 2002	July 2002	Aug 2001
Bear Lake	4.9	4.6	5.5
Bingham	3.2	4.7	4.2
Caribou	6.7	7.3	5.4
Franklin	4.3	3.4	2.8
Oneida	3.6	3.7	3.2
Power	7.4	7.2	4.5

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs declined by 220 dropping from 31,670 in July 2002 to 31,450 in August 2002. The largest declines were in *Government Education* (-80) and *Retail Trade* (-70). Idaho State University employment usually increases slightly in August but statewide budget reductions likely contributed to fewer jobs at the university in August. The decrease in *Retail Trade* was due to a combination of slower consumer buying and businesses working their employees more hours, thereby hiring fewer part-

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	Aug 2002*	July 2002	Aug 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	39,680	40,750	40,300	-2.6	-1.5
Unemployment	2,230	2,370	1,900	-5.9	17.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.6	5.8	4.7		
Total Employment	37,450	38,380	38,400	-2.4	-2.5
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	39,040	39,410	39,640	-0.9	-1.5
Unemployment	2,160	2,190	1,830	-1.4	18.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.5	5.6	4.6		
Total Employment	36,880	37,220	37,810	-0.9	-2.5
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	31,500	31,670	32,090	-0.5	-1.8
Goods-Producing Industries	4,490	4,530	4,590	-0.9	-2.2
Mining & Construction	1,830	1,850	1,920	-1.1	-4.7
Manufacturing	2,660	2,680	2,670	-0.7	-0.4
Service-Producing Industries	27,010	27,140	27,500	-0.5	-1.8
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	1,810	1,790	1,810	1.1	0.0
Wholesale Trade	1,330	1,330	1,410	0.0	-5.7
Retail Trade	6,500	6,570	6,720	-1.1	-3.3
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,810	1,810	1,700	0.0	6.5
Services	8,360	8,350	8,410	0.1	-0.6
Government Administration	3,580	3,590	3,610	-0.3	-0.8
Government Education	3,620	3,700	3,840	-2.2	-5.7

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

time workers. The opening of several new retail businesses will increase the sector's job count in September and October 2002.

SPECIAL TOPIC

ISU Students Return to Pocatello

The impact of Idaho State University (ISU) students on the area is evident by simply driving around Pocatello. Students can be seen walking to and from classes, walking and driving to and from surrounding apartments and houses, eating at area restaurants, and shopping for school and living supplies.

ISU's enrollment this semester reached 13,352, just under its fall 2001 enrollment of 13,663. The drop in enrollment was in part-time students and occurred because classes filled leaving those part-time students unable to get into classes. Approximately 935 students, 7 percent of ISU's full-time students, are from outside Idaho and nearly 9,000 students are from outside Bannock County. Students rent apartments and houses, purchase school supplies, clothing, food, fuel, and recreation. But the impact of ISU students goes beyond what they buy in local businesses and the tuition they pay. Throughout their college careers, ISU students provide an educated, disciplined, and affordable workforce for local employers, they volunteer their services in the community, and they spark lively debate about

social, governmental, economic, and political issues that lead to improved policy and an improved community.

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Please note: Information contained in Economic Developments is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce publications, and other sources.

Bannock County

- Several new stores opened in the Cobblestone Creek Shopping Center in Chubbuck: Pier 1 Imports, Only \$1 Superstore, and Village Crafts by Michael's. Opening of the new businesses, along with T.J. Maxx at the same location, added approximately 150 jobs in the area.
- Sonic Drive-In opened near the Fred Meyer Complex on Yellowstone Avenue in Pocatello. The drive-in offers carhop service and employs about 30 workers.
- Uncle Jim's restaurant opened in Pocatello. The family dining restaurant is located in the former J.B.'s on the corner of North Fifth and Seventh Avenues. The restaurant employs about 20 workers.
- Construction and development continues on the Tuscany Hills project which includes multiple and single family homes and business offices. Construction is currently underway on 200 single-family homes and townhouses. Developer Bill Isley has set aside a tract of land for future commercial development and hopes to build a grocery store and other businesses to support the new residential area.
- American MicroSystems Incorporated Semiconductor (AMIS) broke ground on its new 30,800-square-foot research facility in Pocatello. The new facility will be located on Alvin Ricken Drive, directly above the production facility on Buckskin Road.
- LA Weight Loss Center opened in Varsity Square in Pocatello. The company offers a combination of one-on-one counseling and meal plans to assist individuals to lose weight.
- Convergys Customer Support Center currently employs about 600 workers and will increase its Pocatello workforce by 250 workers. The center provides customer support and billing services for DirecTV. The expansion is because of increased business and recruitment for the additional workers is underway.
- Closure of Consolidated Freightways Corporation eliminated about eight jobs in the Pocatello area. Some of the affected workers were from Idaho Falls and had commuted to Pocatello since the Idaho Falls terminal closed over a year ago.

- Last April, J.R. Simplot Company announced it would close the ammonia plant at its Pocatello facility in August 2002 and offered 86 workers early retirement packages in an effort to avoid layoffs. By mid-August only 45 workers had accepted the offer. Simplot officials have not announced when those workers will begin their retirements or when further reductions in force will occur. Some workers will need to be retained to dismantle the ammonia processing facility.

Bingham County

- C-A-L Ranch opened its new store on North Meridian in Blackfoot. The 30,000-square-foot facility gives the business an additional 11,500-square feet of space over the old store and allows the business to expand its inventory. The store also hired additional workers.
- Clean Flicks has opened at 1053 West Bridge in Blackfoot. The business rents videos and DVDs that have been edited to remove sexual and violent scenes and offensive language. Clean Flicks is a franchise operating in 13 states.
- The Eastern Idaho State Fair was held in Blackfoot in September. Each year the fair brings about 200,000 people to Blackfoot and stimulates its economy. The fair hires about 400 temporary workers, mostly from the Blackfoot area, who earn around \$600 each. The fair spends approximately \$2 million on materials and supplies and most of that is spent in Bingham, Bannock, and Bonneville Counties. Hotels and restaurants in Blackfoot usually are full during the eight-day event.

Power County

- The rehabilitation center at Harms Memorial Hospital will move into a new facility adjacent to the hospital. The facility will enable the rehabilitation center to have more equipment and provide a higher level of privacy for its patients. Construction should be completed by the end of October.

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